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AN
INQUIRY
INTO THE
ABUSES OF THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT
BY THE
MILITIA OF GREAT BRITAIN,
WITH SOME
NECESSARY AMENDMENTS PROPOSED
ADDRESSED
TO THE
PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS
OF
MILITIA CLUB.

Cur auctoritatem
Hoc

E. H. MOISES.

Surgeon to the Western Regiment of Middlesex Militia.

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THE following sheets were submitted to the press, not as containing much original information; but as comprised in a compass well adapted to the perusal of that order of men, from whom only a reformation can take rise, and who, if disposed, may derive every further information from Dr. Hamilton's highly useful, and judicious observations on the Duties of a Regimental Surgeon; to which I am principally indebted for the subject matter of this inquiry.

ERRATA.

Page	Line	For	Read
70	last	Men	Man
74	3rd.	affix	perfix
74	7	ought	ought
84	1	is	are
89	3	he	be
90	Note	referring	referring
95	17	were	was
138	4	Surgenn's	Surgeon's

TO THE
PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS
OF THE
MILITIA-CLUB:

GENTLEMEN,

THE Subject which I have the honour of submitting to your consideration, is of a nature so truly important and interesting to the Military Establishment of Great Britain, and to that of the Militia in particular, that I am persuaded I shall stand in need of little apology in recommending it to your most serious deliberation.

A

You

You have not to learn of the many Abuses which have existed in our Militia ; a very ingenious and discerning Writer* has already noticed some of them, and hinted at their necessary or probable consequences ; but it was in the province of Medical Induction alone to point out their most *baneful* and ultimate tendency, without the knowledge of which every attempt at Reformation must fall considerably short of perfection.

I am the less solicitous in apologizing for the liberty I have taken in addressing this to you, since the Alterations here proposed, are by no means inconsistent with National Economy. And I am too fully convinced of your sincere regard for the Welfare of the State to admit, even for a moment, that you would refuse your attention to the cause of

* Author of the Defultory Sketch of Abuses.

Humanity, and more especially when called upon by the numerous and atrocious injuries offered to your *Children**, on whom a brave and generous people place their chief dependance for the preservation of their lives and properties.

But how are we to expect that generous unanimity, that patriotic spirit, that formidable phalanx which the Militia of Great Britain was intended to exhibit, while barefaced embezzlement stalks triumphant, and is permitted to continue its hourly depredations unnoticed and secure in all the pride and insolence of office? I would be far from anti-

* The free and impartial manner in which the Militia Club have undertaken to investigate this Establishment, and the part which its great and worthy President bore in the erection of this Bulwark of national defence, would seem amply to justify us in assuming the appellation of their *children*.

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icipating evils which might possibly never exist ; but I will speak to those already felt as becomes the duty of a *faithful subject*, and a member of a *free and generous* community.

The necessity of discussing matters of public utility, by as public an appeal, will, I should hope, plead sufficient excuse for the *manner* in which I have thought it expedient to submit my sentiments to your consideration.

Impressed with the fullest conviction of the importance of my undertaking, I am anxious to treat it with all that deference which it most obviously deserves, and unequal, as I am sensible my abilities are, to the task, yet will the grateful satisfaction of meaning well, amply compensate for the uncandid attacks, which it is probable a work of this nature must

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must necessarily meet, from the *illiberal* and
interested part of mankind. If in pursuing the
subject of my inquiry, I have spoken freely,
it is by no means with an intent of casting ob-
loquy on individuals, but through an ardent
wish, that the department in which I have
the honour to serve may be rendered more
respectable, and to intercede for the reforma-
tion of several matters inconsistent with the
welfare of a class of men*, whose situation,
at best, is but uncomfortable, and yet to
whom the community at large are under very
considerable obligations

Disaffection hath not given rise to the sug-
gestions and representations which I am about
to submit to you; they have arisen from the
most mature reflection, and from the fullest
conviction of their importance and necessity.

* I mean the Militia.

Those

Those obstinate Facts which I shall adduce in support of my opinions will, I trust, bear the severest test of scrutiny, and amply justify my arguments against the stigma of *misrepresentation*, or any *ungenerous motives*.

The subject I have ever considered as too serious to be discussed for the purposes of mere speculation, or exhibiting abuses which might never exist. And I have not in any one circumstance asserted that which I might be unable to substantiate on the most positive evidence.

Innovations, I am aware, ought to be introduced with caution; but it were impossible that any policy should justify an Establishment, carried on at the expence of humanity.

I have every where studiously endeavoured to avoid all political discussions, that were not
imme-

immediately connected with the department on which this inquiry has been founded ; and wherever my information has not been drawn from actual observation, it is built on the authority of those who are fully competent to decide.

I might very justly observe in the words of an enlightened Physician*, that the improvements in Medicine and Surgery have uniformly kept pace with those of other sciences for the last thirty years ; That systems then prevailing are now changed or forgotten ; and that the art may be said to have undergone a total revolution ; and the consequence must be, that forms of discipline sanctioned and approved by these authorities, ought in the present enlightened æra, to be revised, corrected, and improved.—To derive the full

* Dr. Trotter, Physician to Earl Howe's Fleet.

(10)
benefit from late discoveries, to abolish all
odious perquisites of the Surgeon's office, and to
establish throughout the department a mode
of duty more consistent with professional pur-
suits, is the express purpose of the work that
now solicits your attention. The more still
to recommend these measures, the saving of
an immense sum to Government, we trust will
not a little urge the necessity of adopting new
regulations.

For the sake of perspicuity and method I
shall proceed to the investigation of each part
in the following order, and shall offer my ob-
jections and amendments on each article se-
parately, viz.

1. Qualification of Surgeons.
2. Surgeon's Mates unnecessary in the Mi-
litia.
3. Supply of medicines and necessaries for
the sick.

4. Plu-

4. Pluralities highly improper, in the Medical department especially.
5. On the difficulties presented to the regimental practitioner, through the caprice of authority, and his want of rank, &c. &c. &c.

Qualification of Surgeons, &c.

THERE have been, and no doubt are at this moment, many very eminent and deserving men in the station of Regimental Surgeons, whose exertions have done honour to their profession, and whose abilities have procured them the highest rank which the schools of science can confer. But that a far greater number, through *interest* or *ill grounded recommendation* alone, have daily found their way to this important office, is a fact too notorious to admit the smallest doubt.

B

To

To the latter only are my remarks directed, whose negligence or indifference to the profession in which they are engaged, might keep them in ignorance of their several duties, and prevent their taking those advantages of dis-ease, which a more liberal education would have enabled them to do.

Nothing surely can be of greater moment to society, than the preservation of health, or removal of disease; nor can greater or more unlimited confidence be placed in any individual than where the lives of his fellow creatures are submitted to his care, and yet is this important trust too often reposed on men from their bare word, without sufficient testimonials of their qualifications being required of them. A confidence that no sensible man would ever think of placing even on a *taylor*, a *shoemaker*, or a *carpenter* without having previously seen specimens of his ability.

Before

Before the latter can fix in business, custom hath ordained, and the laws approve, that a specified term of years, is necessary to his acquiring a competent knowledge in the handicraft, and without which he could not be deemed worthy of the name he would assume. How is it then, that in a department no less essential to military jurisprudence than the soldiery themselves, there should be so little pains exerted in the election of this important officer ?

I have known men who have served not many months behind the counter of a country Apothecary, and who had never attended any public Seminary or Professor, admitted to regimental practice through the intemperate zeal of friendship ; and the ingenious Dr. Hamilton*, among others, relates the case of a

* Vide Hamilton's Regimental Surgeon, p. 100.

private, who having assisted the Surgeon in some menial office was appointed Mate on the first vacancy†. I am aware that extensive natural genius, great diligence, and a disposition of mind peculiarly turned to observation and enquiry, may in a great measure supply the place of education, but where both are wanting what must be the consequence? It is from such examples as these that regimental practice hath derived the numerous and degrading epithets that have hitherto aspersed the medical department.

Military Practice will afford improvement to those only who have been previously accustomed to reflect, and are capable of making observations: it has been justly observed by

† I could enumerate a long string of army and militia Surgeons, whose mode of introduction to the office were little dissimilar to this.

Sir

Sir Wm. Temple, that "Though a man may
 "grow learned by other men's thoughts, yet
 "it is from his own thoughts as well as ex-
 "perience, that he will grow wise." But how
 are we to expect the one or the other from an
 apprentice boy, or from those who, although
 every opportunity may have been offered
 them, have uniformly neglected to take ad-
 vantage thereof, and instead of exerting
 themselves in the laudable pursuits of medi-
 cal and philosophical investigation, have wast-
 ed their time in criminal idleness, but yet,
 through the misguided assistance of friends,
 find means to obtain appointments in the
 Army as Surgeons or Mates, without exhi-
 biting proper testimonials of their knowledge
 or abilities, and too frequently without any
 attempts towards an examination*. What se-

* We could adduce instances of this nature in the
 Army, where it must be more exceptionable than in
 rious

rious defects must there not exist in an establishment, where men may be admitted to push themselves into an office, where it is probable they cannot avoid doing the most irreparable injury? It is not unfrequent in Medical Practice for the best informed to meet with numerous and almost insurmountable difficulties in determining how to act for the best. What then must be the difficulties which surround the young novitiate? How is it possible, but by accident, that those who are not acquainted, perhaps, with the most obvious parts of physiology; should be able to remove the several diseases to which the human frame is liable? They may occasionally stumble on a remedy, but we can expect but little rational probability of success, from their fortuitous attempts; and we the Militia, the operations of the latter being on hospitable ground, where the assistance of established Practitioners might readily be procured.

should

should fear that from their ignorance in *applying*, as well as want of knowledge in the *application* of a remedy, very serious, though not intended mischief might ensue, since the *effects* of any remedy must depend partly on the state of the Patient at the time, and partly on the nature of the medicine exhibited.—Thus may the unqualified Usurper of the Medical Character, ignorant of the duty which he owes equally to his King, his Country, and his Conscience, deal out his drugs; and may, nay does, we fear, too frequently deprive us of our dearest interests. Such is the melancholy picture of our Military Medical Department; to confirm the reality of which, we could adduce numberless examples.

It would necessarily lead to much discussion, perhaps not essential to our present purpose, were we to define those abilities which are proper to qualify the Physician or Surgeon

geon for successful practice ; suffice it to say, that a Regimental Practitioner should possess every advantage which might be derived from genius richly cultured, and which would be deemed necessary in the medical walks of private life ; and, from the peculiar inconveniences to which he is subjected, he ought to unite the double capacity of performing every part of the Physician's duty with the adroitness of the expert Operator. A certain degree of address and dexterity in the performance of a surgical operation, is apt to please and engage the attention of spectators, and from the confidence and facility with which it is managed, most men are enabled to form a tolerable judgment : but it is a matter of much greater nicety to decide in *physical cases* ; and of the latter may be more than two thirds of the number that may come under the care of the Surgeon.

Who

Who, I would ask, in such cases are capable of judging whether the Practice adopted be right or wrong?—In such situations I would be inclined to fear, that an affected air of gravity, and a mystery that cautiously evades all explanation, will too often supply the want of real abilities. That such is frequently the case I can have but little room to doubt, and that it is not even more frequent, seems matter of astonishment to me; since but little attention has hitherto been paid to authentic certificates of what might strictly be called a regular medical education. I am sensible that no mode of examination whatever can be a *perfect Test* of medical abilities, and that much must depend on the opportunities which the candidate may have had of improving his knowledge; and on those advantages he may have actually derived from a regular and extensive course of studies. But how seldom, if ever, are these proper tes-

timonials required? Nay, I could even adduce instances where the Colonel of a Militia Regiment has advised both the Surgeon and Mate against the "*trouble and expence of examination*;" alleging that "his recommendation to the Lieutenancy of the County would of itself be sufficient to procure them the appointments without their being at the trouble of passing such unnecessary forms." It would seem unnecessary to pass any further comment on this Head either in respect to the commanding officer or his advice, let the notoriety of the fact, and the conduct of the officer speak their eulogium—fortunately the conduct of the Surgeon did not coincide therewith.

To prevent however as much as possible such abuses, and to obviate in future all unpleasing reflections which might illiberally be cast on the department; we would propose that every
gentle-

gentleman who may offer himself as candidate for a Surgeoncy, shall produce before the examiners, clear and *undeniable vouchers*, that he has spent a certain term of years (viz. five at least) in his initiation into the first rudiments of his profession; that he has attended, and with *diligence*, Lectures on Anatomy and Surgery for two courses; Chemistry, the Theory and Practice of Medicine, and an Hospital or public Infirmary with Clinical Lectures for one course; and as every Regiment has with it a certain number of Women, he should not be ignorant of Midwifry, and the treatment of those diseases more peculiarly incident to early life.

I would be far from wishing to infringe on the rights and privileges of that Honourable Board which has hitherto been vested with exclusive power in the examination of Army Surgeons; but, when it is considered that at
least

least two thirds, or perhaps nineteen in twenty* of the cases which may come under his care are strictly physical, it will not, we trust, appear an useless or unnecessary innovation, should we propose that every candidate previous to his examination by the Board of Surgeons, shall pass the ordeal of physical inquiry. From among the numerous enlightened Members of the London College of Physicians ; many I am persuaded would stand forward for the advancement of science, and cheerfully devote some hours in every month, generously to promote the public good.

Rules of this nature cannot possibly be deemed severe, or unnecessary to qualify the

* From the 15th of January last to this day (June 4th, 1794,) there have been upwards of *four hundred* men under my care, of which number upwards of *three hundred* were strictly Physical cases.

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member of a science, no less extensive in its views, than it is difficult and useful in its practice. And although we are aware that such Forms of Education, are not always necessarily followed by sufficient qualification, yet can we by no means admit that the science of medicine can be learned from instinct, without the advantage which these might afford.

Sur-

Surgeon's Mate unnecessary.

SURGEON's Mates, have in general been considered as an absolutely necessary part of the military establishment, as well in the Regiments at home, as in those on foreign service; but I have long been led to consider them as by no means essential to the establishment, and even in many cases productive of the most serious inconveniences to the department in which they act. For as much of the care of the sick in general devolves on them, much mischief must necessarily ensue; unless their opportunities of acquiring knowledge, and their assiduity in the practice of their profession, be at least equal to what should

should be required in the Surgeon ; but how seldom do we find this the case ? Men of knowledge and ability we should fear would seldom accept a situation which subjects them to the most humiliating and degrading subordination. A subordination totally repugnant to professional pursuits, and which cannot fail to damp the zeal of the most active and deserving. Their rank (if it may be said to be such) is barely a remove from that of a non-commissioned Officer, and subjects them in a manner equally absurd, as it is unjust, to the frivolous insolence of the ignorant school boy, whom birth or fortune may have placed in a situation which, at least affords him an opportunity of insulting the man, perhaps no less venerable for his age, than he is respectable for his knowledge. Alas ! what injury to the service may not this produce, and how strongly does it not point out the necessity of repealing such ill-formed regulations ?

These are not the only grievances which the Mate is frequently obliged to encounter. Government has liberally provided for the supply of medicines* in proportion to the complement of men in each Regiment; but having submitted the entire disposal of the allowance to the direction of the Surgeon, it becomes necessary that the Mate should receive immediately from him every article he stands in need of towards the treatment of his sick, and from this consideration it would require but little sagacity to infer, that, unless he is regularly and properly supplied with medicines, the afflicted can derive but little benefit from his visits or prescriptions. That such deficiencies have actually existed I can have but little room to doubt; since I believe it is a general rule with Regimental Sur-

* We shall take occasion to speak concerning this allowance under the Head of Medicines, &c. for the sick.

geons to save as much as possible from, what is called the *medicine money*, as their *perquisites* must necessarily be in proportion, yet should we not lay blame to them alone, but to the Establishment, which, regardless of times and seasons, hath limited their pay to a sum by no means adequate to their necessary expenses ; under circumstances like those we have mentioned, if the Mate has any regard to the welfare of the men, his situation must be peculiarly irksome. Under circumstances like these, first-rate abilities could avail but little, since he would not have it in his power to execute what his discernment dictates : in course they become disgusted, and lament that moment of misfortune which incautiously had hurried them into a situation so *ignoble* ; and perhaps, should these not determine them to quit a service, in which they could not remain with honour and satisfaction, they gradually contract an habit of carelessness and

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indolence ; and, finding that every effort to merit attention, as well as the most uniform and diligent application to their profession, can attract nor respect nor notice, they are no longer ambitious to attain it ; their *Esprit du corps* diminishes, till at length they become equally indifferent with their predecessors to what happens in the line of regimental practice : by degrees this indifference settles into habit, and they gradually lose all relish whatever for the profession.

Ought we then to be surprised that so few men of letters should be found in the department since their labours and exertions are so ill requited ; or, that ignorant mechanics should quit their trades, and launch at once into the practice of every branch of medicine ? Thus, “to *see* is not to *observe* ; and “the hoary Veteran who has looked for ages “on the complicated ills to which human nature

“ture is subject, may at last be uninformed,
 “and unworthy of our confidence. But the
 “world thinks differently ; with it, to be
 “young is to be *ignorant*, and to be old, *saga-*
 “*cious*.”

By thus driving men of merit from the service, and admitting such as were by no means qualified for the office ; the Military Medical department has become little better than a Theatre of Empyricism ! We have before observed, that many, even now, might be found in the capacity of Surgeon or Mate, whose abilities *ought* justly to command respect ; yet might we venture to affirm, without passing the boundaries of truth, that a much greater number might be found who deserve all the severity of this remark. Nor do we believe it can be otherwise till better regulations are permitted to take place, as well in the manner of their admission as by holding forth

forth such encouragement as might induce men of regular education, first to enter into, and then to continue in the service.

Who, might we not ask, would give himself the trouble, or incur the enormous expence necessary to his *proper* qualification, for the poor pittance of *three shillings per day*? The pay was not less thirty years ago, and notwithstanding every article in life hath encreased to nearly twice its value, yet have not the necessary means of purchase been augmented. To live on so small a stipend*, when their necessary expences are considered, is barely to exist.

* Mate's full pay at 3s. 6d. per day for 365 days amounts to 63l. 17s. 6d.; but 3s. per day only is issued as subsistence, which is 54l. 15s. per year: nor does the Surgeon receive any more as subsistence, although his full pay at 4s. per day, for 365 days, amounts to 73l.

If

If Surgeon's Mates are however deemed necessary to be continued in the army, every possible attention should undoubtedly be paid to their choice, since it is possible that thro' interest, or some *lucky chance* ‡ they may in time be Surgeons. Yet under the circumstances above stated, how will they be fit for the duties of their office? Is it not rather to be expected they will implicitly confirm an adage of antiquity, that in regimental practice "More die by the lancet than the lance?"

‡ It is very rarely that abilities, however eminent, meet the reward of promotion in the medical department of the army—Many who had been regularly educated as Surgeons and Physicians in the first medical schools in Europe, went as Mates during the last war, but, who finding themselves mistaken in regard to the nature of the service and the choice they had made, soon retired from an office they could not remain in with credit to themselves or usefulness to their fellow-creatures.—Hamilton, p. 167.

If

If this be true, it certainly cannot be matter of indifference to the State, since the reformation, if any is ever to take place, must necessarily come from thence.

However that may be, they ought certainly, previous to admission, to be *strictly* examined, and without *partiality*, by a Board of Surgeons, respecting their knowledge in the *surgical* branches of medicine; as also by a Committee of *Physicians*, relative to their abilities in what is more properly called *practical medicine*; nor should they be admitted to the privilege of undergoing such examinations without producing *good* and *authentic* certificates of their having spent some years in diligent attendance at some Medical University, or other reputable Medical School.

The propriety of this, I am fully persuaded, must appear evident to every one
who

who may be enabled to judge, how much of regimental practice partakes of the province of the Physician. Brocklesby, who wrote on the subject thirty years ago, and whose opportunities of being well acquainted with Army practice were by no means inconsiderable, seems perfectly convinced, " That all
 " future examinations of persons employed
 " as Mates or Practitioners in the Army,
 " should be solely submitted to some one of
 " the Censors of the College of Physicians,
 " together with any one of the Army Physicians, conjointly, who know the requirements for the office for which they stand
 " candidates."

By some regulations similar to these regimental practice might be rendered more respectable, and men of undoubted reputation and ability would not, as now, consider it beneath them to accept the office either of
 Sur-

Surgeon or Mate; nor would they quit the service when such ill-contrived laws were repealed. But we have already delivered it as our opinion, that the office of Mate is altogether superfluous, at least in the Militia; and it now behoves us to give our reasons for such opinion.

The complement of many regiments, as well of Militia as the Line, during the late and present war, have not exceeded *seven hundred and thirty-six* rank and file; and I believe the sick report of a regiment of the above complement will seldom or never exceed *fifty*, one day with another: we might likewise observe, that out of this number, perhaps, not one half actually require any medical assistance whatever; it being the custom of the army, at least I can have no doubt of its being so in the Militia, to put all such as are unfit for duty into the Surgeon's

geon's list, whether they be sick or not; since it is necessary to account for every man receiving pay, and borne on the establishment of a Regiment; and there being no place to arrange them in the returns to the Commanding Officer, or in those to the War Office, so convenient as this.

If then a Surgeon has never more than fifty men to visit daily, he could seldom, we should think, complain of great fatigue, when we consider that perhaps even out of this number, two-thirds will frequently be found with little else than *cut fingers*, trifling eruptions, &c. not to mention those who may be in want of *shoes, cloaths, or other necessaries*. In some instances, however, from the Regiments not being compleat, or otherwise, the average number will be yet considerably lessened, perhaps to twenty or thirty; in which case he will certainly have leisure, not only

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to attend properly to the exigencies of his sick, but also to reflect on the nature and treatment of their several diseases; and should any extraordinary case occur, to turn over authors who have treated on the subject; to attempt its comparison with any similar case he may have met with in his practice; to observe minutely the effects of medicines exhibited; and to change or continue them as occasion may require.

We need only turn our attention to those who are in the habits of visiting a much greater number daily, not only in their attendance on large hospitals, but likewise through an extensive private practice. I believe every individual will coincide with me in affirming, that the principal fatigue of the profession more generally arises from the distance of our patients from each other, and not to any number when collected under
one

one roof, as in an Hospital; and we should suppose that every Regiment of Militia throughout the kingdom either is, or ought to be provided with an Hospital*.

In private practice, or in public Hospitals, our patients frequently require considerable attention; since few are ever admitted into Hospitals, or employ practitioners in private life, who do not really stand in need of their assistance; and surely there can be no just reason why the Regimental Prac-

* Government have with their accustomed liberality provided each Regiment with an Hospital tent, while in camp, but not to be used in garrison or quarters:—had the latter restriction been dispensed with, and the Regiments been allowed to take them with them, I am persuaded the service would have been benefited thereby.—I have heard the same remark from different Regimental Surgeons, and have felt its propriety in the Regiment to which I belong.

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itioner should not be able to go through the same*. Let his compensation be proportionate ; let his life only be made comfortable, and his office more respectable, and he will seldom think his medical care of a Regiment, even of a *thousand men*, too laborious.

It has been objected that the Regiment is often cantoned in separate divisions at a considerable distance from each other, when it would be next to impossible for one person to visit daily all the quarters. Granted ; but provided an established Surgeon in each town, where any division or party may be stationed, were engaged to attend them, it would be no difficult matter to prove that the soldiers would be better attended, and would perhaps have more efficacious medicines administered to them when sick, than could pos-

* We shall speak of Pluralities hereafter.

sibly, according to the present system of Regimental practice, be the case under the care of the Mate, *limited* in his practice as he generally is.

The *settled* practitioner in private life, is under the necessity of dealing largely in medicines, both in regard to abundance and variety, and his reputation would suffer from inattention to their quality. He buys them also at a cheaper rate, and is enabled to afford a neat and genuine medicine to the soldier, perhaps for much less than the Regimental Surgeon can his *coarse* and frequently sophisticated drugs *; and surely it would be unnecessary to observe, how far a good medicine, well prepared, exceeds in efficacy

* The Surgeon is often obliged to purchase medicines of a retailing apothecary, or country druggist, and must necessarily be subject to the tricks of both.

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such as are ill prepared; and how far an agreeable vehicle is necessary to the successful exhibition of medicine.

Thus if proper encouragement be given to the Surgeon, now acting, as we shall suppose, without a Mate, he may be enabled to keep a horse*; and will therefore find no great difficulty in visiting the different cantonments, at least once a week, to converse with the Surgeons, under whose care the men are placed, concerning their different complaints, as well as to convince himself of their being properly attended to; and should any case prove tedious, or doubtful in regard to its nature or event, some advantages may be derived from their consulting together.

* Even as circumstances now are, most Surgeons find this absolutely necessary; and perhaps can only find the *means* in *savings* from the *medicine money*.

Where

Where several Regiments are encamped together, a Physician is usually appointed, and a general Hospital established, in which case it must be obvious that a Mate* must be altogether unnecessary, since every difficult case may be sent there:—But even admitting that no general Hospital be established, yet will not the Surgeon have more fatigue than in barracks or quarters; since the extreme limits of an encampment are seldom more distant from each other, than the different billets of men in quarters?

It may be objected, that if the Hospital should be at some distance from the lines, some medical person should be left in camp, while the Surgeon visits his Hospital; but this we should deem a very unnecessary rule:

* In speaking of Mates we wish to be understood as alluding to Regimental ones only.

should

should any accidents happen, are not the men readily carried to the Hospital? Should there be any difficulty in this, a very short time may bring him to them. I have heard it urged, that Mates cannot be dispensed with while on actual service; encampments may certainly be considered as on actual service, and having shewn their inutility in the one case, the like undoubtedly must follow in the other. In garrison or camp, the soldiers are never so scattered, but the Surgeon may conveniently give his attendance; and wherever general Hospitals are established, his labour must be considerably diminished. In case of an action, much assistance, no doubt may be necessary; but even in these cases, the wounded are sent as fast as possible to the Hospitals, and besides a general action, is what rarely occurs, at home especially: affrays, or skirmishes occasionally happen, where a few men only may be wounded;

but

but this can never be productive of so much fatigue to the Surgeon, as to require a Mate in the constant pay of Government.

Should the Surgeon at any time fall sick, it may certainly prevent for a time the execution of his duty; but in England he will find it no difficult matter to engage the assistance of some established practitioner, in the village or garrison where he may be quartered, who will readily undertake his duty, if not through motives of friendship, at least for the *medicine money*, or an equivalent thereto*. A neighbouring Clergyman will ever readily officiate for his sick brother; and I am inclined to believe few Surgeons would refuse to do the same for their sick friend.

* We would propose an allowance for this purpose, when such assistance could not be dispensed with.

It has been observed, that as the Physician or Surgeon could not do all the drudgery himself, an assistant must be absolutely necessary; but we have already said, that little drudgery or fatigue attends it, not more at least than might be easily overcome by the assistance of an hospital nurse, and one or two orderlies, whose services might even surpass those of the Mate, without any additional charge to the State.

In most Regiments there are some worn-out old men, whose age or infirmities ensure them the privilege of remaining on the sick list*. From these the Surgeon may always be enabled to select one or more, as occasion may require, and with but a very few days

* Since I joined the Western Regiment of Middlesex, in March 1793, I could have recommended duplicates of this class, to every Regiment of Militia in the service.

instruction,

instruction, they might be enabled to perform all the ordinary duties of a Mate†. I know from experience this is practicable; and have found many whom I had thus taught, far more useful than the Mate could have been.

We know that in time of war officers are not scrupulous in their choice of recruits; almost any thing which bears the appearance of a man is acceptable; but in peace it is far otherwise: in these times the young, the strong, and the healthy only are enlisted; hence it may naturally be supposed that a greater number will be sick in time of war: yet, even though endemics should arise, we should imagine the Surgeon would not find much difficulty in attending properly to all

† Medicines would of course be compounded by the Surgeon, which could not occupy more than two hours per day.

their

their complaints, without any other assistance than that of his *Orderlies*. While the Surgeon's avocations partake so little of the laborious, where can rest the utility of a Mate? Men unacquainted with the nature of professional service, might object that it would be improper for the Hospital to be left at any considerable distance, while the Surgeon's attendance might be required in the field on field days. To these I would answer, that his attendance is by no means *necessary*, and might readily be dispensed with. Indeed, it is generally required rather as a compliment to officers, than from any possible expectations of utility; and is never expected but when officers are present.

The reasons alleged for the necessity of his attendance, viz. lest accidents should happen, are perfectly nugatory: the accidents which occasionally occur either in camp or
on

on field days, are of so trivial a nature, as seldom to require the presence or assistance of a Surgeon; it is very rarely they are more than the *mere scratch* of a flint, or a trifling cut in the hand from the hurry of fixing or returning the bayonette*.

I know but of one accident more serious, and which arose from the firing of a field-piece; while one of the men was in the act of ramming down the cartridge, the wadding struck him on the left side, the whole of which was more or less bruised and burnt, as was also the face of the same side; this took place at the distance of five miles from

* Dr. Hamilton, whose services gave him ample opportunities of making observations on this head, states but three, as the whole catalogue of *accidents*, which had occurred there for several years; neither of which could be done any thing to, until removed to the Hospital.

the

the Hospital, yet could nothing material be done till his removal thither. In such cases, where can be the necessity of a Surgeon's presence in the field? I am fully confident he might ever be more usefully employed at home, where he should keep himself in readiness on days of exercise, lest accidents should happen. In the field his presence can have little use, since he could not carry a medicine chest along with him, and the most serious accidents are not always such as to require the use of bandage or of plaister: yet perhaps, through custom only, it may still be considered as *necessary*; it may be so, but surely every one must yet allow, that with proper directions, the Orderly may readily supply the place of Mate in the Hospital, during the Surgeon's absence, which will seldom exceed but a very few hours.

I might

I might adduce, perhaps, a still more forcible argument than any of the former, and ask, whether it is usual for any medical person to be left with the Hospital on field days, or on public reviews? or whether, either the Surgeon or Mate of a Militia Regiment ever attends on such days, in the sole and express capacities of Surgeon or Mate *. I believe on such duties it is customary for both to take their respective posts in the battalion, by virtue of their Subalterns Commission †; and I have known the Surgeons and Mates of three Regiments, acting in battalion some miles distant from their encampments, with-

* We shall have occasion to speak of the impropriety of double commissions in another place.

† The Surgeon of the Western Regiment of Middlesex, is perhaps a solitary instance of deviation from this custom, and that only at particular junctures.

out

out any one of the profession being left to officiate at the Hospitals, or in the field.

I am aware that habitual customs, however absurd and inconsistent they may be, resist the power of innovation, even among the intelligent; though perhaps, nought but custom, and the force of habit, can possibly be urged in their favour: yet let us remember, that "custom, unsupported by reason, is but little better than an antient error," and that improvements of any kind, or in any department, commonly meet with opposition, through motives of self-interest or of prejudice,

Supply

Supply of Medicines, and Necessaries for the Sick.

PERHAPS there is no part of the department more essentially important, or which hath been more abused, than the supply of medicines, &c. for the sick. Government have provided in the most liberal manner for this purpose; but have granted those ample allowances through a channel, which must in a great measure limit those beneficial effects, which might otherwise be expected from them.

The allowances granted to the Surgeon of a Regiment, consisting as embodied of five hundred men, or upwards, amount to 150l.

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per annum; 30*l.* of which is allotted to provide an Hospital, &c. the remaining 120*l.* for the purchase of medicines. These allowances are issued without any proof whatever of their expenditure being given or required from the Surgeon; nor do I believe the medicines allotted for the privates are kept either in proper quantity or quality, although in the most sickly seasons, and under the most disadvantageous circumstances, not more than 40 or 50*l.* per year can possibly be required for the purchase of *medicines alone**.

When

* I have had an opportunity of being well acquainted with the Surgeon of a Militia Regiment, who, although he had under his care upwards of *nine hundred* cases from the 2d of March to the 31st of May in the ensuing year, yet had not expended more than 62*l.* for a very ample supply of the best chosen medicines during that period.—It may not, however, be amiss to remark that, instead of profiting by the remainder, he found himself *minus* by several pounds at the expiration of thirteen months. This, however,

What then is done with the remaining hundred pounds? it undoubtedly becomes a perquisite of office to the Surgeon.—Odious perquisite! destructive regulation, which perhaps too frequently may rob the sickening soldier of those comforts which his bounteous King intended him; and it is possible, perchance of life.

How dreadfully defective must not that establishment be deemed, which could admit the barest possibility of such a conse-

however, is a rare occurrence, and what I trust will seldom be met with in the Militia of Great Britain, while commanded by that splendid circle of *Property* and *Nobility*, which at this moment grace its cores.—

Unhappily for the gentleman I allude to, he was under the command of an officer, whose every moment was directed by the forcible and interested suggestions of need; and who, instead of attempting the alleviation of sickness, seemed rather to participate of benefit in its encrease.

quence?

quence? And such is the establishment I now am speaking of. Happily for the welfare of the service, this reflection, I should hope, could not extend to many Regimental Surgeons; there are, I am convinced, many whose humanity and conscientious care of their sick, are no less exemplary, than are their education and abilities respectable; but I likewise know there are many, whose conduct and capacity would admit a character as diametrically opposite.

I would by no means infer, that the Surgeons alone are to blame; Government have certainly erred in giving this money entirely to the management of the Surgeon, at a time when the scantiness of his pay would not fail of admonishing him to appropriate as much as possible to his own immediate exigences.—Surgeons have ever been dealt with very partially, as well in regard to their rank

rank as pay ; their *subsistence* is peculiarly mean, and by no means adequate to their services. Let me not therefore indiscriminately cast any ungenerous stigma on my brethren of the profession. Many there are, I am persuaded, whose minds are far superior to any sordid views, and who rather than follow the peculative example of their superiors in rank, would willingly restrain their own enjoyments to promote the comfort of a suffering soldier ; but since they are placed in a station so expensive, on a stipend so contracted, and so greatly inadequate to their *necessary* expences, their poverty, no doubt, must be a powerful temptation to the commission of fraud ; nor should we deem it culpable in them to appropriate for their own use, as much as can be conveniently spared from the purchase of medicines ; it becomes only criminal when these bounds are exceeded. Happy should I be were it in my
power

power to offer an equally good apology for the little regard generally paid to the *quality* of medicines used in regimental practice: these are usually the cheapest, and perhaps the coarsest articles of the *Materia Medica*; and are seldom, we fear, either prepared or administered in a manner which might secure their efficacy, or ensure their success. Perhaps, there is no less art and knowledge requisite in adapting the preparation of a medicine to the constitution of our patient, than in the discrimination of that class, best suited to their several diseases.

I have heard it urged, that medicines for regimental practice should be of the cheapest sort, as best agreeing with the fund allotted for their purchase; and that these might even be allowed of a *coarse* and *inferior quality*, since they are "*only for soldiers*, men little accustomed to delicate living, or nice medicines;

dicines; and that if their general tendency of operation were the same, the same effects must necessarily and invariably follow."

The former argument we have already refuted by shewing, that the allowances granted for their purchase, can seldom be found inadequate thereto;—the abettors of the latter we would answer, by observing, that we could only suppose them equally *ignorant* as *illiberal*, since among the soldiery, we have frequently to struggle with the nicest feelings, joined to the most delicate and irritable habits, formed so by nature, and now aggravated by disease. How would a coarse or ill-prepared medicine suit with such a constitution?—should it chance to be retained, perhaps it might be worse than none, since, instead of proving serviceable, we should fear it would create more numerous and distressing symptoms.

What

What varieties of medicine do we not frequently in such cases, find it expedient to make trial of? And how often is it necessary to alter our *formula*, without essentially changing our medicine; but those of *inferior quality* can derive but little efficacy or advantage from the form or vehicle in which they are exhibited.

Again, may a practitioner have paid every attention to the selection and quality of his medicines, yet greatly err, as well in the mode of preparation, as of exhibition. Thus may the same remedy, in the hands of different persons, produce, as we too fatally experience, very opposite effects: this might be imputed solely to the penetration and genius of the prescriber; but, since medicines are the medium through which he attempts the attainment of his purposes, should they be deficient, these must be defeated.

But

But it may be asked, How may we be able to effect the remedy of such abuses?—perhaps nothing more easy.—I am extremely diffident in regard to the perfection of the following plan; yet, having occurred to me as the least exceptionable, as well on account of the facility of its execution, as for the benefits the service might derive therefrom, I have ventured on submitting it to your consideration; confident that from its adoption a more *liberal* and *salutary* mode of practice must result, while the venal and the mercenary shall not have power to act unjustly.

We have before shewn, that the present allowance of 120*l.* per annum, for the purchase of medicines, was, perhaps, in every instance, more than adequate to that express purpose; and that the mode of granting it to the discretionary management of the Surgeon, was deserving of the severest reprehension,

hension, as producing, perhaps, some of the basest derelictions of duty. This allowance, then, we should recommend to be entirely withheld, as also the Hospital allowance of 30*l.* per annum; in lieu of these, chests sufficiently large, properly fitted, and their contents selected by a Committee of Surgeons, and a Physician-general, shall be sent to each Regiment, while others are in constant readiness for supplies; but every Surgeon shall nevertheless have it in his power to demand other articles, or an *extra quantity* of any article he may judge necessary to his practice, by assigning sufficient reasons for the preference. These shall be issued from a Government Dispensary, under the direction of a Surveyor-general, and prepared by an Apothecary, with a sufficient number of Mates assistant.

I have taken the liberty to recommend the establishment of a Dispensary, under the sole influence

influence and direction of Government, because I am persuaded that by such means, medicines equally good, or perhaps superior to those from Apothecaries Hall, might be afforded at a saving of *one-third* of what the *modesty* of the Apothecaries Company have permitted them to charge.

A supply of the best chosen medicines, as well as some of the more necessary surgical instruments, &c. issued in this manner, and sufficient for the sick of a Regiment, complete at *seven hundred* or even *a thousand* men, would not, I am convinced, even under the severest duty, or inclemency of season, exceed the purchase of 60 or 70*l.* nay, I might even more frequently reduce it to 30 or 40*l.*

An Hospital for the sick, should be provided when necessary, and the *actual expence* only incurred thereby charged to the contingent

tingent bill ; as a certificate for such expenditure, the Surgeon's signature, *on honour*, shall be considered as a sufficient voucher. His Majesty, with that peculiar regard to the health and welfare of his subjects, which hath ever characterized the reign of " George the Third," has been graciously pleased to allow each Regiment in Camp an Hospital Tent, capable of holding with convenience twenty or thirty men ; were these permitted to be used by the Surgeons when in quarters and in camp, the expence of Hospital Rooms for particular cases, would seldom exceed 10*l.* per year : I have experienced the great utility of these tents in diseases of the epidemic cast, and have also felt their want severely.

There would still exist a want of those little comforts, which, though not strictly to be comprehended under the class of medicines,

cines, are yet no less essential to the alleviation of disease; among these, which may be termed *necessaries for the sick*, may be included *sugar, jago, wine, &c.*

These, in the way of food and cordial, properly prepared and fitted to the condition of the patient, tend frequently to the support of strength, and very essentially to the confirmation of his cure. I would not assert that the Surgeon has it not always in his power to administer such, but I might confidently affirm that he seldom does administer them.

In truth, there is no express fund for this purpose, and should cordials of any kind be necessary, they must either be charged to the sick man's account, or furnished by the Surgeon out of the medicine money: from the latter it undoubtedly should come, if it will
afford

afford it—and of that we have already had occasion to speak.

Many diseases occur in which there is an absolute necessity for the liberal use of wine, to assist and expedite the effects of medicine ; and without which our every effort at a cure may prove abortive. In the dysentery and scurvy, the contagious, putrid, hospital, or camp fever, modern Physicians seem principally to confide in this grateful and salutary stimulant.

A bottle or two of wine in some cases proves of little service ; and many cases have occurred in practice, where a bottle or two per day, and that too for many weeks together, would be too narrow an allowance.

In a low nervous, or putrid fever, a bottle or two of wine would be productive of but little

little effect ; whereas, if continued, it might perhaps stop the progress of the disease ; or, at least, enable the patient better to support its pressure. It has frequently happened, that from administering two or three bottles in the twenty-four hours, and throughout the course of the disease, the happiest effects have resulted, and the lives of individuals preserved, who would not otherwise have been able to bear up against their diseases. Yet how seldom is this salutary cordial prescribed by Regimental Surgeons, even in cases where they could not be ignorant of its utility or necessity ? 'Tis true, should the Surgeon exceed the allowance of *three* or *four* bottles, in as many weeks, he will seldom fail of receiving a very *forcible admonition* to be sparing in its use ; and yet, as we have already observed, the life of our patient frequently depends
on

on the liberal, though judicious use of wine*.

To prevent therefore any want of this, when actually necessary, and to secure its administration from the whims of ostentation, or caprice of generosity, I would earnestly recommend, that it should be issued from some public store-house appropriate to that purpose; and that the Surgeon might have it in his power to demand it, as often, and

* In some Regiments, it is customary for the Captains to order wine, when necessary, at their own charge, for the sick of their respective Companies.—Dr. Hamilton speaks of the Officers in the 10th Regiment of Foot, in the highest terms, with regard to their humanity and attention towards the Privates when sick.—I am happy in an opportunity of bearing the like testimony of the philanthropy with which the Officers of the Leicestershire Regiment treat their sickening soldiers.—Would I could say the like for every Regiment of Militia in the service.

in such quantity as may be deemed expedient, giving proper certificates of its necessity.

The Board of Ordnance, with that liberal spirit for the public good, which hath ever characterized its present *Master-General*, have long since found the expediency of this, and have granted to the Surgeons in that department a power of demanding any quantity of wine and bark, which the exigencies of their sick may require; while at the same time their allowance of Medicine Money of 12*l.* for every fifty men remains unaltered.—

Why any one class of individuals in a state of sickness, should be more entitled to attention or indulgence than another, I must confess myself at a loss to determine! The fact is too notorious to admit of controversion; let others comment on its consequences.

Pluralities, &c.

I Have seen so many gross abuses existing in ; and so many inconveniences arising through the vestiture of *separate capacities* in an individual, that I am equally unable to withhold my regret or surprize at the tacit sufference of such intemperate indulgence : an indulgence (if such it can be termed) pregnant with consequences most destructive to the service, as leading to the most gross and *unavoidable* derelictions of duty.

I have known (alas, why have I known it ?) six separate and essentially distinct appointments vested in one person, and that per-

person *not adequately competent to any one* ; and I might add, without passing the boundaries of truth, that his successor surpassed the disqualification of his predecessor both in regard to his *ignorance* and *neglect* of the several duties necessarily arising from those separate appointments.—Of this however I shall say no more at this juncture, but will confine myself to that more inconsistent sufferance of Pluralities in the Medical department, which it is utterly impossible any plea should justify, and which cannot fail of being highly prejudicial to the service.

The study of military tactics and of the several duties of an Officer must necessarily engross a considerable portion of his time, who is intent upon distinguishing himself in the profession of arms ; and surely the man of Physic, who should be ever competent to aid the reparation of those injuries which the ravages

vages of war have given rise to, would not require less time for the attainment of proficiency in a science no less varied and extensive in its views, than it is beneficial in its practice.

A science, the boundaries of which have hitherto escaped our view, but the benefits and utility of which are universally felt and acknowledged. I believe every Medical man, who has liberality enough to divest himself of interested motives, will assert with me, that, an attention to the principles of any other profession must ever be incompatible with the attainment of a perfect knowledge (as far as may be) of the science of medicine. Taking this as a maxim beyond the power of controversion, I would ask, how is it possible that any man should be capable of performing every duty necessarily arising from separate and distinct appointments, each essentially and every way opposite in their nature. The faculties of men are

finite,

finite, and perhaps I might add the science of medicine is altogether *infinite*.

While these known facts remain incontrovertable, no one I am persuaded will be able to advance one grounded reason for admitting the Surgeons or Mates* of Militia regiments to hold any other appointment than what is immediately connected with the medical department. In the standing Army, or what in general terms is called the *Line*, no such pluralities have of late been admitted. His Majesty became sensible of its impropriety, and in consequence forbade its con-

* I have already offered it as my opinion, that Mates in a Militia Regiment are perfectly unnecessary to the Establishment ; but although it may nevertheless be deemed proper to continue them, I am convinced it would by no means be consistent with sound policy to admit their holding other Commissions.

tinuance.

tinuance. How it could possibly be supposed less exceptionable in the Militia I am at a loss to determine. The duties of each, (save in *locality* of circumstances) are alike in time of war; and the salutary prohibition in the one case, should undoubtedly have extended to the other.

It has been allowed, I believe chiefly on the plea of making up for the scantiness of the Surgeons pay, and were it always understood as merely for the purpose of supplying that deficiency, without subjecting them to the duties of a Subaltern Officer, it would certainly be less exceptionable, although even then it would certainly be considered as a partial hardship to the Subalterns, who in such circumstances would be under the necessity of performing the duties of another, without any portion of his emoluments, while that other would be suffered to enjoy a sinecure

cure appointment, the emoluments of which his brother Subalterns had perhaps too hardly earned.

But it will shortly be my province to point out a mode of enhancing the Surgeon's pay, without imposing hardships on any one; while at the same time it shall be such as could not but be productive of benefit to the state, and of manifold advantages to the service.

The various branches of Medical Science are not, as I have observed, the intuition of a day, and the mazy labyrinth towards proficiency eludes our passage. The fundamental principles of science, its progressive improvements, the mysteries still hid within the bosom of nature, require the faculties of study, to their last exertion, and yet should we grow old in seeking what we cannot find. In short,

short, the man who would affix a boundary to his study in the science of Medicine, must assuredly affix limit to the acquisition of his knowledge? How then should we expect success from the attempts of such a man, either towards the palliation or cure of disease? Would his directions then be sought but quackery? and would not his half stored mind have action only as a mere mechanic organ?

The accuracy of observation, and the intensity of study, necessary to the arriving at even a tolerable degree of proficiency in Medical philosophy, are not the only arguments to be adduced in support of my opinion against the sufferance of Pluralities. The *duties* and *pursuits* of Military men, are so diametrically opposite to those incumbent on the Medical professor, that he must either be inadequate to both, or cleaving to the one

one, neglect the other.---In either case the service must be injured, and I am firmly of belief that in almost every instance, one or other of these remarks are daily found to be confirmed.

The manners of Military men, subject to various temptations those, whose tempers, dispositions, and passions are perhaps as yet unripened by the meliorating hand of experience: the human mind readily accords with the example of another, and assumes a feature congenial to those with whom it is obliged to associate. The nature of that duty incumbent on a Medical man, requires him to reflect, and shun those pleasurable scenes, which others of the Corps might enjoy perhaps more innocently, while much more leisure would be left for his attention to his patients, for the *necessary* perusal of different Authors, and for making such obser-

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vations as may tend to the improvement of his future practice. Nor would any one regard such circumspection with indifference; while every Officer will regard a Surgeon of good behaviour, and assiduity in his profession with respect and esteem, they ever will, or ought to condemn or reproach a contrary conduct. The man who can prefer the "baseless fabric of a vision"—or of visionary enjoyments, to the duties imposed by his profession, should, as the liberal, the learned Dr. Hamilton observes, be avoided by the Officers of his Corps as a disgrace, not only to them but to the service, nay, to humanity. And from whatever cause it may proceed, it should be marked with some stigma of reproach, some token of disapprobation. On the contrary he who joins not in their revels, nor their folly, will not be deemed as of less consequence in himself, or less worthy the esteem of others, for absenting from
their

their parties ; while he can apologize for such absence, by his attention to the sick, and the improvement of his practice. “ Our attention” says the learned Zimmerman†, “ becomes more perfect by the advantages we “ derive from a habit of observing. The “ mind satisfied with its former discoveries “ becomes always more desirous of improve- “ ment in proportion as it extends its know- “ ledge”.

If then a Regimental Surgeon, does the duty of a Subaltern, which I believe is almost universally the case with those who hold the commission thereof, he will not only be restrained from paying that attention to his sick which might be absolutely necessary, but even those moments which we have

† On Experience in Physic.

shewn,

shewn, should ever be devoted to the study of his profession, must be directed to pursuits every way opposite and disconsonant thereto. Men must ever partake of the *manners* and *behaviour* of those with whom they associate, and whatever may be their leading passion, ours will be the same. Thus by a frequent necessity of joining his brother Subalterns, the Militia Surgeon will engage in pursuits, conversation, and amusements every way similar to theirs: he partakes of their recreations and their duties, nor can he be supposed to have the welfare of his sickening soldiers much at heart. If he visits them perchance, it is but for form, and his prescriptions mere mechanic practice. “ A mechanical routine of practice is of all others “ the most contemptible, whether in or out “ of the Army. A man who has only one “ prescription for all diseases, is a quack to “ all intents and purposes; nor is he less one “ whose

“ whose head is stuffed only with prescrip-
 “ tions. A mechanical routine, also, it must
 “ be, unless a certain portion of our time be
 “ dedicated to the perusal of books, the ex-
 “ amination of the progressive improvements
 “ made in the science, and in the careful ob-
 “ servation of phænomena at the patients bed
 “ side*.”

But how will the Regimental Surgeon find or time or inclination for the important functions of his office, while exposed to the various obstacles already enumerated.

These reflections have arisen only from the most urgent and full conviction of their necessity, as well as from a consideration of the power of habit on the mind, and should not be understood as conveying any insinuation whatever to the prejudice of Officers; but merely as leading to the forcible, but single

* Hamilton's Regimental Surgeon.

inference,

inference, that the more leisure is left us for the study and improvement of one and of our own profession, the more firmly do our minds become attached thereto, and *vice-versa*.

The duties of an Officer require that Parades should be attended; guards mounted; attention to dress; attention to the behaviour of the men; attention to their discipline; with a variety of other *etceteras*, known only to military men. The Surgeon also, in common with his brother Subalterns, if he enjoys a Subaltern's commission, must take his tour of duty, or his brother Officers must suffer from the indulgence so partially granted to him. Indeed why should he not, since he enjoys the benefits arising from it?

In short I would ask whether the Surgeons in Militia Regiments have less to do in their medical capacity than the Surgeons of the
Regu-

Regulars. On the contrary, the Militia Regiments, I believe in general are more numerous, and consequently their proportion of sick must be greater. The regular Regiments I believe are seldom complete, while the Militia always are or *ought* to be so, since the County is under the necessity of supplying the complement of men*, while the regulars recruit but slowly, and by chance, at various distances and disadvantages. It has been alledged that as the operations of the Militia are confined to England alone, their number of sick cannot exceed, or even equal those of the Regulars, whose place of action can only be limited by the exigencies of the service. But perhaps there are few parts of the Bri-

* It is true, one of the Metropolitan Regiments in Lieu of *Eight* had only *Five* effective Companies during the whole of the year 1793—to whom this negligence should be imputed, future investigation may determine.

tish dominions more subject to disease than England. Various diseases rage in many parts of it endemically, and the Militia, as Dr. Hamilton observes, being subjected to Camp and Garrison duty, equally with the Regulars, must of course be equally liable to the diseases peculiar to those situations. And I believe there are few Militia Surgeons, who in those situations, have not found them to occur "with all the violence which they are generally observed to produce."

I believe few Regimental Surgeons either of the Line or Militia, can speak with greater confidence as to this point, than myself, who have had upwards of *eleven hundred* cases under my care from the 2nd of March, 1793, to the 15th. of August 1794, and the greater number of those, diseases which require the utmost care and attention. Happily

pily for the Regiment I did no duty in the capacity of a Subaltern for a considerable time, or my unhappy patients must have had cause to regret it.

All these call for the most uniform and steady attention on the part of the Surgeon ; which it is impossible should be the case, while his time and his pursuits are divided between two professions, so diametrically opposite to each other, as those of Surgeon and Officer.

If it is believed that a Surgeoncy of a Militia Regiment on the same footing with one in the Line, is not equivalent to the latter's chance of half pay, why not devise some other scheme to make up the deficiencies.

From the moment in which I became acquainted with the Service, it has uniformly

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been

been my opinion, that the regulations in regard to the Pay of Surgeons is not only perfectly inadequate to the trouble of the Office, and the expences of a liberal Medical Education, but also such as to discourage men of professional abilities from entering the service. And I am daily more and more convinced, that unless Regimental Surgeons are placed on a more honourable footing as well in regard to their rank as pay, few, who deserve the name of Medical Practitioners, will accept the Office.

According to the system now in use, it matters not what their abilities are. The *literate* and *illiterate* are equally rewarded, or, more properly speaking not rewarded at all.

If a man, not only in this, but in any other walk in life, who truly from his merit deserves attention, instead thereof, meets only
with

with neglect, it is apt to induce in him a real negligence, " he may despise those who are " to be his judges, and slacken his endeavours, " equally indignant either of their applause or " reproach."

Since then merit here can seldom distinguish itself, some other aid should be called in; and these seem to be Rank and Pay, the only things in the army that can command respect, or attention; and without these his usefulness can never be so great*.

* Hamilton's Regimental Surgeon.

On

*On the Difficulties presented to the Regimental
Practitioner, &c. &c. &c.*

THE Difficulties presented to a Regimental Surgeon, as well from the malevolence of others as from the casual incidents of life, are by no means few ; and not only tend much to impede the salutary exertion of his Office ; but are such as, if he be possessed of humanity, and a tenderness of disposition cannot fail to afford him much bitter uneasiness, and a continued source of disquietude.

To

To enumerate all the inconveniences arising to the Soldiery in billets, and to observe how frequently these are productive of disease ; would be to state what every Military man is well acquainted with, and would only spin out this paper to an unnecessary length. I cannot however, consistent with any principle of honour, or of justice, neglect to notice such as are of greatest frequency, and most importance, yet are not without means of remedy, or prevention.

The Soldiery in England are only billeted in Public-Houses, and the Landlord ever considers them, not only a nuisance, but as a heavy draw-back on his profits. Hence are they treated coldly ; their lodgings perhaps in many instances permeable to the inclemencies of season, while the very air they breathe is frequently so vitiated as to produce the most obstinate and distressing symptoms.

Thus

Thus if the weather be severe, Catarrhal affections, and other more violent diseases of the inflammatory kind are induced, which not unfrequently terminate in death.

In, short I believe "many a prisoner in is
 "cell is better lodged than we find many of
 "the Soldiery in billets; yet will they seldom
 "complain, if their situation, be at all toler-
 "able;" complaints indeed, instead of being
 productive of any real good, are too fre-
 quently succeeded by mutual animosity. The
 Landlord is haughty, and perhaps malevo-
 lent; the Soldier retorts it by improper con-
 duct; while the Landlord issues with reluc-
 tance those necessaries with which he is by
 law obliged to furnish the Soldier, and which
 are often of the most inferior quality.

The Beer too in Billets, or in Barracks, is in

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general vapid and unwholesome†, so as to occasion cholics, diarrhœas, and other troublesome complaints; nor can these be removed until the cause shall cease and a change is made in this article, which is not always in the power of the Surgeon, however desirable, to accomplish, “ And who can only attempt a remedy by a complaint to the commanding Officer, which as often fails of the end in view, as it obtains it*. The billeting of
of

† I am happy in bearing testimony to the *humanity* or *some other principle*, which induced the Quarter Master of a Militia Regiment not many miles from Gosport, to withhold from the *Barrack Companies* of the Regiment *some Hundred Gallons* of this Beer, when it was thought and reported by others as absolutely necessary for them.

* Happy should I be were it in my power to remark, that *Commanding Officers* are *always* attentive to the welfare of their Regiment, but having had daily
oppor-

of Soldiers in time of war, is indeed a heavy burthen on the Publicans, and it were much to be wished that, the Butcher and Baker, as receiving more of the Soldier's pay than the Publican, were equally subject to this tax. As the system now is, can it be supposed the Publican will ever consider the Soldier in any other light than as a grievous tax upon his profits.

But how shall I apologize for its inferiority of quality as issued to the Soldiery in *Bar-racks*, and for its being *occasionally* and *partially* withheld from them. I can speak with confidence respecting one Regiment in which I had frequent opportunities of tasting the Beer,

opportunities of observing as diametrically opposite a conduct, I cannot help referring to the notice taken of the Surgeon's reports for that purpose, in the
W—ft—n R——t of M—dl—x.

and

and do firmly believe the Soldiers would often have fared better from a similar quantity of Jallap and Vinegar. At least I am convinced those diseases which arose in consequence, were, strongly indicative of its possessing similar qualities.

The King, most obviously intended by this allowance to make up to the Soldier what he lost in not being quartered on the Publican; and perhaps this bountiful consideration of his Majesty would be productive of the most salutary effects were its quality more strictly attended to. I have often been led to consider, that as Regimental Quarter Masters are frequently men of little consequence, and perhaps still less *principle**, they should not have it left them to pervert the public good,

* At least, I know, there are such as would answer this description. *Verbum sat, &c.*

by rendering his Majesty's allowances to the Soldier principally subservient to *individual interest*†.

The Surgeon then I would suppose, as best knowing what might be prejudicial to the health of the Regiment, should, as a part of his duty, visit the Barracks on certain days, and take cognizance of every thing which could militate against the continuance of health, and report such matters to the commanding Officer of the district *only**.

† No Officer in the W—st—n R—t of M—dl—x can doubt of this !

* I have observed that these reports should be made to the Commanding Officer of the District *only* ; because I have but too often, and too *fatally* experienced the *inhuman* negligence of the Commanding Officer of a Regiment towards such reports:

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Soldiers while billeted in Public Houses acquire a rooted habit of drinking, and will ever, so long as one penny remains, spend it in liquor, although they be not in possession of another to buy them bread ; hence a variety of irregularities and disease ensue, subversive of good order, and highly prejudicial to the service ; and perhaps its ultimate consequence leading to that foulest of all crimes a Soldier can commit, viz. that of desertion.

This leads me to the consideration of Messes as best suited to prevent this horrid vice.—In many Regiments it is customary, and it is a custom highly honourable to those who enforce its observance, that a certain number of men, in each Company, shall form a Mess (I believe in general five to each Mess) who are regularly and uniformly supplied with proper animal and vegetable food for the consideration of *four pence* a day,

day, being allowed to spend the remainder of their pay in Bread, Beer, &c. Thus are they obliged to live as men, and the most effectual mode adopted to prevent their degenerating into brutes*.

But there is a matter of abuse still more gross and glaring than any of those already mentioned, I mean that *unpardonable* conduct which some Militia Colonels have adopted, in permitting and even *enjoining* the privates to go a *jobbing* when off duty ; a practice ever to be reprobated, and the officer who admits it deserving the severest reprehension. That such is the case any man, who will be at the

* Unhappily for the W—t—n R——t of M—dl—x it has hitherto been unable to support any plan which required the exertions of a *Quarter Master*, or which could possibly interfere with the *natural depravity* and *private interest* of its Commanding Officer.

trou-

trouble of visiting Gosport, will not have left him room to doubt.

No man of sense could hesitate in judging how far such a custom must be inconsistent with the health, duties, and discipline of a Soldier ; in the first place it subjects them to repeated and unnecessary fatigue, from which a variety of diseases take their origin ; it subjects them to every species of intemperance, proscribed by his Majesty's regulations, and which cannot fail to sap the very fountains of health ! It likewise tends to alienate their minds from attention to their necessary or occasional duties, and must ever be subversive of good order and discipline. In fine I have been witness to the existence of this abuse in a Regiment where the number of privates were even inadequate to the common duties of service, and wherein the Surgeon and other Officers had frequently reported the impropriety

priety of its being suffered, while in lieu of preventing the baneful consequences daily arising from its continuance, the evil was permitted to encrease and a considerable number of men lost to the Service.

The want of an Hospital must ever be a serious inconvenience to a Regiment in which the number of sick is at all considerable. People in general are extremely averse to let Houses for this purpose on any consideration or emolument whatsoever : what then must be the Surgeon's embarrassment should he have several men ill of dangerous fevers, and no Hospital to which he could remove them? Such has really been the case, and it requires little sagacity to determine what injuries the service must have derived therefrom. In such cases he must attend them at their billets ; and having already noticed
how

how frequently these are prejudicial to men in health, it may readily be infered they could not be less so in a state of sickness. In many instances the principal part of the Cure consists in pure air, which is rarely to be found in such situations, and in such cases, the best directed treatment must ever in a great measure be frustrated.

Another Difficulty, and that a most material one, under which the Surgeon often labours, is the want of a good, careful and tender Nurse. A vast deal must ever depend on a Servant of this nature, as it is altogether impossible the Surgeon should be always present with his Patients. The Nurse ought to be present with the Patients on all occasions ; since it is her duty to administer both drink and medicines with care and punctuality, the latter at such precise times as the Surgeon may think proper to direct ; for should any neglect

lect occur in the exhibition of Medicines, it may not only retard the patient's recovery, but may frequently be productive of the most fatal consequences. " Suppose them neither given in the quantity prescribed, nor at the proper intervals, the effects which the prescriber expected may not follow; and should the neglect be kept a secret from him, (which is generally the case) it may produce an unnecessary change in the plan, to say no worse, and, in the end, perhaps, with no advantage, if not detriment to the patient. Every one much conversant with the sick knows the inattention of the generality of nurses, for sometimes both his practice and reputation suffer by it*."

In the Army it is not always easy to pro-

* This however can seldom be the case among liberal minds, and such as are acquainted with the Service.

cure

cure a Female Nurse†, and indeed a trusty *orderly man*, appointed from the Regiment to this duty, will in most cases answer tolerably well; and is perhaps in many instances even preferable, as it would be more easy to enforce obedience to such orders as are given by the Surgeon. The *orderly man* or *men* (for the number of *orderlies* should ever be proportionate to the number of sick) should continue and not be suffered to change every week, or oftener, as is sometimes done, as it will require some time to qualify him for the office, and he would thus be relieved from

† At a time when the Regiment was harassed with a Putrid fever, and no Female Nurse was to be had on any consideration whatever, the *customary* assistance of an *orderly* was positively denied, although it was obvious to every Officer in the Regiment that the Sick were daily sinking through the want of such assistance only.

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the duty at the time when he had but just acquired a knowledge of it.

There should no doubt ever be a *Woman* on the Establishment of a Regimental Hospital for the purpose of Cooking, Catering, and making drinks for the Patients in Hospital, and for preparing medicines that require culinary treatment. She should also have a kind of command or authority over the other *orderlies*, and keep them steady to their respective duties. And these orderlies should be the most trusty men, as it often happens that the Surgeon is obliged to direct his practice according to their representation of the state of the patient between each visit; thus if that be false, or inaccurate, his plan of practice must be fruitless, or perhaps prejudicial, as leading him astray in his subsequent prescriptions, and producing more mischief than can possibly be retrieved. Such are the difficulties

ties that oppose the Surgeon's successful practice ! And here may his Character and Patients both be lost ; and others culpate him, when perhaps he least deserves it. This truly is heaping Pelion upon Offa, and is surely one of the most serious misfortunes under which a Regimental Practitioner labours. And " if he wishes to discharge the duties of his profession as an honest man ; it is what must give him many hours of bitter regret and sad mortification."

The Hospitals themselves are in many instances pregnant with every inconvenience which could arise from exposure to cold, or confined air, &c. and the Learned Sir John Pringle observes : " Among the causes of sickness and death in an Army, the reader will little expect that I should rank what is intended for its health and preservation the Hospitals themselves ; and that on account
" of

“ of the bad air, and other inconveniences attending them.

Again should the House be permeable to every shower which is but too often the case in Regimental practice, even in Summer it must be but poor accommodation, and in Winter altogether intolerable. It was under circumstances like these, I was *obliged* to practice, with a numerous sick, in the Months of March, April, May, and June of 1793, when to heighten the calamity, no fire could be kept in the Barn (for no house of *any kind* or with a fire place could be had on any consideration) and while the Regiment through *want of Cloathing*, was almost in a state of nature*!

* This was frequently reported to the Commanding Officer in the most forcible terms ; who either wanting the power or inclination to effect a remedy, treated them only with the most obstinate and inhuman negligence.

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“The want of fire to those under some particular complaints not requiring confinement to bed, is a very chilly and cheerless circumstance,” and during some seasons it is scarcely tolerable even for those in health to sit without a fire in such inclement weather as we frequently experience in the changeable climate of Great Britain. Under such a grievance the Nurses, Orderlies, and Patients, one and all become discontented, and having real cause for murmur, can only lay their grievances before the Surgeon*. What can he do? He may and will regret the situation along with them, but it will be impossible

* It has occasionally been a custom, (and certainly a good one were it strictly attended to by the Commanding Officer) for an orderly Officer to visit the Hospital daily for the purpose of reporting such grievances to the Commanding Officer, but unhappily, *for the sick at least*, those reports have as uniformly been thrown aside unnoticed.

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for him to change it, so long as private interest shall take place of public good*. But the evil stops not here ! Not being supplied with that salutary degree of heat, which is necessary to health through the assistance of fire, they are consequently tempted to seek it from *Drams*, and these they will take every stolen opportunity to procure. For although a Centinel is constantly posted at the door to prevent irregularities, yet do they frequently find means to bribe him, who for his share of the spoil will wink or connive at what his duty enjoins him strictly to repress. Neither Patients or Centinel consider these evils as of much magnitude ; yet, to many they are matter of the greatest moment. It is however

* I would ask the Quarter Masters of Militia Regiments whether it is a custom to *sell* the savings from Coal and Candles while in Barracks? At least I would *hope* and *believe* it is not a general one !

such

such only as are called *maligners* that more frequently commit irregularities, and create more trouble in the Hospital than all the really sick. “ But if the Centinel permits them to wander out of the house, or liquor to be brought in, it is long before the imposition could be discovered, though the Surgeon be ever so vigilant ; for so great will be the conspiracy among the Patients, that they will not readily discover one another.”

An instance in point of this remark has lately come within my own knowledge ; the Colonel of a Militia Regiment would not allow an *orderly man* to attend the Regimental Hospital, although at one time upwards of *eighty* privates were in a state of extreme sickness, and most from a putrid fever, while the Surgeon could not procure Nurses on any consideration or emolument whatever. In course the Nurse whom the Surgeon had regularly

gularly kept on the Hospital establishment was *obliged* to employ the centry occasionally in the Hospital (though contrary to the *express order* of the Surgeon) while in the execution of some office which the Nurse had requested him to perform for a patient, a woman found her way into the Hospital with some spirits, and having enticed one of the patients out, went some distance from the Hospital to drink it. The Patient however returned but no report of his conduct was made to the Surgeon. Unhappy negligence! Untoward presage of a future ill! In the night following while the Centry was on a similar duty as before, the same Patient, contrived to escape, and though every exertion was made in search of him, yet could he not be found till next morning, when it appeared he had drowned himself in a Pond, on the bank of which stood a bottle in which there had been *Rum*. What could have been the feelings of the
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Commanding Officer, when he must have been sensible, that had he granted an attendant *orderly man* to the sick, the Centry would have been left to his post, and no such accident perchance have happened? Happy indifference of mind! He thought not of it, but to criminate the Surgeon!!!

The want of bedding in a state of sickness must ever be succeeded by consequences too obvious to require a Comment. I cannot however pass it over without observing, that during the whole Campaign of 1793, and till the 29th of July, 1794, I had only *Ten* sets of Bedding, while, during the whole of that time, I had never less than *Thirty* cases, and more uniformly from *Fifty* to *Seventy*, and these too in general of the acute kind. What could be done? The difficulty was repeatedly reported, and as frequently did those reports remain unnoticed, till I addressed the Secre-

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tary at War by Letter, whose humanity led him to send me *Ten* sets more, or the consequences must have been fatal to the Regiment.

The murmurs of Officers towards the Surgeon, if a man's complaint is not so readily relieved as their anxiety would wish, is a serious and a cruel grievance; and the common topic of conversation from the Officers to the Surgeon, is in general concerning the length of time men are kept in the Hospital.

An Officer is no doubt deserving of praise, for every due attention to the privates he may command; but this, or rather the *semblance** of
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* I have not to learn, that a Commanding Officer, has appeared, or endeavoured to assume such attention, while himself and *agents* were in the *hourly* practice

of it may be carried to a pitch very troublesome, and even far from commendable as respecting their medical treatment.

This appears like merit, but it is not such; and I verily believe, in general, has no other view than to create uneasiness to the Surgeon. If he is really negligent no spur can surely be too sharp for him, but if diligent and attentive to his duty, it is cruel, it is unjust and reprehensible, and is perhaps more frequently a mark of ignorance than attention to the Soldier; and indeed, young Officers, who are not even acquainted with their own duty, are in general most troublesome in this respect, their vanity leading them to shew their superiority over the medical department in point of rank, without taking into consideration of every species of peculation from the privates!!!

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ation the age, knowledge, merit, or other qualifications of the professor.

Medical knowledge belongs not to the profession of an Officer; nor can a want of it take from their merit as good Soldiers. Dr. Hamilton observes, " That if *Commanding Officers* knew something of Physic, it would render them better judges when the Surgeon did, or did not discharge his duty as he ought. But this (he proceeds) is an *impossibility*, for many solid reasons. If it could be found practicable, it would be frequently of service both to the Surgeon and his patients. He could explain the reasons that retard the cure, when the subject happened to be started, while the Officer on the other hand, would be better qualified to guard against any imposition." As things now stand, " the Surgeon has it in his power to deceive his *Commanding Officer* if he be so disposed, and thereby

thereby cover either his own ignorance, or neglect ; and again, his Commanding Officer would not blame, where, perhaps, in place of censure he deserved praise."

It is from a consideration of this, and from a belief that such is too frequently the case, between Commanding Officers and Surgeons, that I shall venture to offer it as my opinion, that Regimental Surgeons should only be responsible to a superior in their *own* profession with regard to their *medical treatment* of the sick. This might readily be done, and the Regimental Surgeon kept strictly to his duty. For example : Let the Surgeon be *obliged* to keep a regular Register of the sick, with their several cases, and their treatment ; which shall as regularly be examined by a Physician General, once in every *Sixty days* at least : and to induce a more particular care and attention to these particulars, let some honourary

nourary insignia be granted to such Surgeons as shall appear to have merited most from their ability and humanity. Thus would Military practice become a School of Science, and the welfare of the sick individual interest to the Surgeon: for encouragement is certainly the pabulum of genius, and the first support of emulation. To withhold it where due, is like frost to the tender bud, which blasts the hopes of spring, and proves untimely destructive.

The Commanding Officer will still have much in his power, as well in the Medical as disciplinary walks; nor should he withhold from the Surgeon a considerable share of his confidence, provided the Surgeon be a man of veracity; diligent in his duty, and well informed respecting the cure of diseases, as we have before shewn he ever ought to be.

But

But according to the present system of Regimental Practice, the Surgeon can never be of such extensive use as otherwise he might prove. His rank, if it may be called such, is too low and menial to give him weight or consequence, and as I have already remarked, rank is all in all, in the Army.

It was the opinion of Broklesby*, that if any Regiment or Corps has the fortune to have only *one* judicious, humane, and sufficiently-able Field Officer, it may always be wisely regulated during his residence with it, and has the direction of the whole. More, says he, is to be expected from the Lieutenant Colonel and Major, than from the Colonel, as it is but seldom he remains with the Corps* ; but where all three concur to

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* On Military Diseases, &c.

* The force of this truth has been *severely* felt even
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this end, and are desirous of every useful information from *literary* men, as well as from those of their own profession, we may easily pronounce, that the Regiment will be fit for service on a very short notice, and able to undergo the severest hardships".

A Surgeon's Education, says Hamilton, (for he is supposed always to have been liberally educated) renders him a proper person for much of the confidence of the Commanding Officer*. In all things respecting the Soldiery (their manœuvres alone excepted) he can communicate from time to time, much useful information, from his instruction aided

in a Regiment where the Colonel was almost uniformly present.

* And it must ever be to the Commanding Officer's *interest* to grant him such confidence as regards the welfare of his Regiment.

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by the *orders* of the Commanding Officer much disease may be prevented in the Regiment. Domestic discipline and the arts or prevention, as is well known, can do more oftentimes than physic; and what is still better, may, for the most part, be applied with little or no inconvenience, either to the men themselves or to immediate Service; and things tending to this end, it should be his province to point out and inculcate, and which would consist of matters little regarded but by the philosopher*. He proceeds to ob-

* I can affirm, strange as it must appear, to every liberal mind, that the Surgeon of a Militia Regiment has, in the most respectful manner, for *eighteen months* past, made such reports to his Commanding Officer as could not but tend to this purpose, while instead of being assisted by the Colonel's orders to this end, those *orders* have been as uniformly, and as peremptorily opposite.

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serve, that where the appointment of Field-Officers has been happy; and where the same regard has been paid to the Medical appointment, almost every disease, except such as arise from contagion, may be obviated in the Regiment. Wise regulations strictly enforced, will be found efficacious even against unwholesome diet, climate and the other vicissitudes of a Soldier's life. In the Navy, where more care is taken than in the Army, we find it so; and since there are on land less obstacles to encounter in putting such regulations in execution, we may reasonably expect equally good effects. This however, it is to be apprehended, will never come to pass, till the Surgeon has superior rank, and till more care be taken in the choice of this important Officer. It is little we are to expect in the walks of philosophic life, from young and uninformed boys; yet much of Regimental practice is committed to the care
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of such. We may as reasonably expect much Military experience from *beardless Colonels*, as much medical knowledge from *beardless Doctors* : and yet a man is not always to be esteemed for his age.

The Venereal disease has become so prevalent among the Soldiery, as to produce an infinity of trouble and vexation to the Surgeon, perhaps more than any inconvenience hitherto noticed ; indeed it has become so general among Soldiers, as to preclude reproach either from their comrades or their Officers ; and while such shall continue to be the case, all hopes of reformation are shut out. Yet how necessary does it seem, some punishment should follow, and every possible coercion used towards its suppression. Officers endeavour to apologize for its existence, by remarking that “ It is the common course of nature to desire women ; if you can deprive
“ men

“men of their passions, then may you of
 “women, not otherwise.---And why attempt
 “to deny the Soldier a gratification, which is
 “so natural, and enjoyed at pleasure even by
 “the brutes ?” But Dr. Hamilton has ably
 answered these remarks, by a trite and just
 observation “That it is only the common
 course of *vice*, and not the common course
 of *nature*, thus to contaminate themselves.”

The Deity hath ordained a difference of
 sexes for the purpose of propagating and
 continuing the human species, as well as
 other classes of animals, nay, even the vege-
 table kingdom is found to partake of the same
 general law ; yet hath the Deity laid thereon
 certain restraints. He was aware that to
 have women in common would be the bane
 of society, as laying the foundation for num-
 berless ills, and as tending to annihilate, ra-
 ther than increase the species. Where shall
 we

we be able to find in one person, the woman of *easy virtue* and *prolific womb* ? Shall we not exclaim, from woeful experience, that while prostitution shall be general, disease, or want of population must invariably follow ?

In what is termed the irrational world we find a strict adherence of *one* male to *one* female, so long as it is necessary to effect the great purposes of nature. The feathered tribe, I believe one and all, adhere to one mate, until their common progeny be capable of providing for themselves. Thus the laws of nature and the regulations of society require, that, for the purpose of propagation, the female should confine herself to one male ; or should she wander loose in her desires, admitting every solicitor, sterility must be a necessary consequence ; and were such an universal practice, the human race must shortly be extinct.

Hence

Hence it would seem necessary to devise some method for the entire suppression of fornication, or at least of rendering the opportunities of contracting the disease less frequent. To assist in effecting this, such practices should ever meet, the disapprobation of Officers, as well as some fixed punishment ; while on the other hand, every possible countenance and encouragement should be held out to marriage, which could be consistent with the nature of the service.

I am aware that marriage is not absolutely prohibited in the army, but I well know that it meets with too little encouragement ; and Dr. Hamilton observes, " That he has seen a manuscript book of orders, wherein the men were entreated not to marry." How deeply must not this affect the welfare of the service ? Many families, even under the present regulations are brought up in the Army ;
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and were such encouraged how vast must be the increase ? and the strength of our Army proportionately great ; for then would the wives of privates become nurses to the state, and their children at a proper age, recruit either the Regiment wherein they were born, or some other. And perhaps from this service only, would a considerable body of troops, and those the best soldiers, be added to our Army. In short I am confidently of opinion, that by giving every encouragement to marriage with *modest women*, innumerable benefits must accrue to the service. I know, that on foreign Service it becomes necessary that only a certain number of women should accompany the Regiment, but this cannot possibly hold in the Militia ; and besides, it is well known, that prostitutes often find means to accompany a Regiment on foreign Service, while married women are separated from their husbands. What a reflection must it
not

not be on any man to admit such imposition, and how necessary is it to prevent such illicit conduct as far as possible. Dr. Hamilton has very judiciously proposed that a register be kept of the married men in each company, pointing out the time of the marriage, and the names of the parties ; to ascertain the really married, and in order to exclude prostitutes ; and surely were such measures adopted they might assist in obviating such imposition, and might operate as an encouragement to marriage. Again no woman of ill fame should be suffered to have connection with the single men, while a reward should be offered to such as discovered any one who kept them secreted, and some stigma of reproach, some token of opprobrium fixed on the offender*.

Per.

* In the whole course of my observations and enquiries I have never been able to discover such attention

Perhaps if some pecuniary fine were passed on every Soldier who had contracted this disease, it might contribute to prevent fornication. This is the custom of many Regiments, and should certainly meet the approbation of the Legislator ; as, when no such fine is imposed, they contract it with the less reluctance. In most regiments they are fined a Crown for the cure of this disease, which is given to the Surgeon as a perquisite ; but it ought certainly to be otherwise disposed of. This fine should be levied by stoppages of a *penny* or *two-pence* a day, till discharged ; and by this means the punishment would continue until the payment of the last penny---This would not distress them much, but would operate as a caution to their future conduct.*

tention and encouragement as the married men experience under the humane command of Lord Charles Spencer, in the Oxfordshire Regiment of Militia.

* In the Navy a fine of *fifteen shillings* is exacted from every Sailor under this disease.

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When a married man shall be found to have contracted this disease, the fine should be double, as well on account of the dreadful effects it may produce on his wife and family, his having less temptation (consequently less excuse) for going astray, and the breach of those vows so solemnly sworn before God.

The money arising from these fines should not as hitherto be given to the Surgeon, but as Dr. Hamilton very humanely proposes, should make part of a fund for the relief of the *modest* married women of the Regiment when incapacitated by sickness from earning their bread.

This subject leads me to repeat, that Officers should be cautious of reflecting on the Surgeon, in regard to his treatment of this complaint above all others, should it not be so soon removed as *they* may suppose it ought.

For

For perhaps to day the Surgeon shall discharge a man perfectly cured, and the same evening shall that very man have connection with some filthy prostitute, and in a few days, nay, it may be even in a few hours, he will return to the Surgeon ill of the same complaint *newly* contracted, and that too perchance with redoubled virulence ; first telling his Officer, in order to screen himself, and obviate a reprimand, that he was sent to duty by the Surgeon, before he was *properly* cured ; at the same time cautiously concealing his own illicit amour. That such is currently the case, any one acquainted with regimental practice must have known, and such have been the difficulties under which myself have laboured, while I was happy in reflecting that, “ *Mea mihi conscientia est pluris, quam omnium sermo,*” and while I was known by others to be equally regardless and undeserving of their censure.

But

But there is yet another argument evincing the propriety and necessity of suppressing this promiscuous use of women in the Army. I mean the *decay* induced thereby on the constitution of a Soldier, since no man, who has suffered from repeated attacks of this disease, can ever enjoy good health, or be long fit for the duties of a soldier. Should he contract a confirmed lues, how difficult is it to eradicate such from the constitution? Even in those who have every convenience favourable to the cure! What then must be the case of a private Soldier, who has to wade through every thing which could tend to retard or prevent his cure? The Officer is perhaps impatient at his continuing so long in the Hospital as must be absolutely necessary to the performance of a radical cure, and is constantly complaining of the great number of sick. But what can the Surgeon do? Undoubtedly he would endeavour to avert the
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ignorant and illiberal reflections which might arise from his keeping a patient long in the Hospital, and is chiefly anxious to remove the worst symptoms only, that he may mark him out for duty. But the unhappy victim must ere long return : " he has a rheumatism ; universal pains ; nodes ; inflamed eyes ; impaired sight ; impaired hearing ; is asthmatic ; has obstructions, perhaps, of the liver ; obstructions in the urinary discharges, either in the bladder, or constrictions and caruncles in the course of the urethra ; is affected with fistula in ano ; is covered over with venereal ulcers ; is totally cachectic ; and though a young man, seems worn down with age and infirmities ; a constant sanies discharges from his head ; has glandular swellings ; is hoarse from an affection of the palate ; and has lost great part of his nose ; his head is giddy, so that when he stoops he has scarce strength to raise himself ; his lungs are affected, and he
has

has a severe cough, and purulent expectoration; he drags out some months longer a life of misery, and then falls, at an untimely age, a martyr to his irregularities." How destructive to the Service, then must not this loathsome malady appear? And how necessary it becomes to check its progress in the Army?

It would little be expected that I should mention, the admittance of Recruits, as one of the difficulties, and that not the most trivial, under which a Surgeon labours. It becomes his province to examine *all* men enlisted, in order to ascertain their capacity for service, and it becomes no less his *duty* to pass or reject them, as circumstances shall point out. In the Regulars his difficulties are much greater; for, if a recruit be rejected by the Surgeon as improper, the Officer who enlisted him will take Offence, since in all probability he will suffer some considerable loss, as he can
never

never refund to the Officer what was given him as a recruit. On the other hand, should the Surgeon, through favour to the Officer, accept him, and sign his name to the sound list, how will he reconcile such conduct even to himself, when it becomes obvious not only to the Commanding Officer, but to the whole Regiment, that the man was really unfit for service. In such case he must be discharged, the King loses a Soldier, and the Service is injured. But however the Surgeon may act on these occasions, he can seldom fail of giving offence to some one. He would be highly reprehensible in cheating his Sovereign by the signing of a falsehood; and it must certainly be a painful task, to reject a recruit, and subject to some considerable loss, the Officer, who perchance may not have wherewith to support himself, but by his pay; and who is under the increased expence of the recruiting Service. It however becomes incumbent on
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the Surgeon to act in the most perfect regard to the principle of his duty, since the public weal *ought* ever to take place of individual interest. Thus "conscious of having discharged the duties of his station and profession, as far as in his power, he will console himself under any undeserved reflections that may be thrown out against him in the course of his service. Did there exist no other reason to wish the Rank of a Surgeon in the practice of a Regiment greater, and the place more honourable, this alone would be a sufficient one : I mean, that it might place him beyond the power of the ill-judged remonstrances of persons whose knowledge (or rather want of knowledge) in his profession give them no shadow of claim to such an authority, or ascendancy over him.

In the Militia however no *Officer* can suffer from the recruiting of a Regiment, nor can the
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Surgeon have any plea whatever for relaxing in his duty with regard to the passing of recruits---On the contrary it would appear that an Officer entrusted with the Recruiting of a Militia Regiment may pocket some *hundred pounds*. But how would the patriot† ask, could such be practiced with impunity? To illucidate this I might refer to the complaints exhibited by a *body of Officers* against Colonel N*** B** wherein the said Colonel was charged with having “received and directed to be enlisted as substitutes, procured at a cheaper rate, persons diseased and unfit for service, without directing the said persons to be examined by the Regimental Surgeon, previously to their being enlisted or mustered, and thereby, and by other ways, and means, for his

† I mean not by the term *patriot* a factious disturber of Government; but he who shall be inspired with the *sacred love of his Country*.

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own private interest neglected to keep the corps under his command always complete and in constant readiness for immediate service." In fine it is well known that a Militia Regiment has received many recruits who were procured at a *cheaper rate*,* and without passing the examination of the Surgeon, and who were and are (to the number of one hundred or upwards) totally unfit for service,

Thus was a Regiment rendered non effective; the Service grossly injured; and the Surgeon's list of sick crowded with recruits, who had been laden with disease at the time of their admittance, and for *several months prior*.

* It may be remarked, that the men alluded to were the refuse of other Regiments, procured at the consideration of from *five* to *seven* Guineas, although *ten* were uniformly allowed for that purpose, and while perfectly sound and able bodied men were rejected, rather than allow the *stipulated* sum.

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If then Commanding Officers† may be suffered with impunity to be guilty of every species of default, and to oppress the Surgeon, by loading him with the care of diseases not acceding while in service ; it certainly must speak most forcibly for the enhancement of his pay.

If it be wished that men of ability and science should enter into, or continue in the service ; their encouragement should at least be equal to what they ought expect in private practice ; and did we daily consider the many hardships to which the Surgeon must be subject ; and to which, *out* of the service he

† I would not be understood as alluding to Commanding Officers in *general* ; nor can I in justice withhold to observe, that while the *Major* was Commanding Officer of a certain Regiment no Recruit was admitted without passing the examination of the Surgeon.

could

could not be exposed, it ought surely to be more than equal.

It would be absurd to suppose that a man of science and ability, whose profession is his fortune, and whose time and money hath been spent, towards the acquirement of a proper knowledge therein, would ever accept a Surgeoncy in the army, for the *paltry* pittance of 100*l.* per annum* ; while in common life he might reasonably expect to realize *four* times that sum, and that too with less fatigue, and a better reputation. Why then not allow him the same hire ? Were that even done, he could not be on an equality with the other Officers in many respects.

The Surgeon must have passed the age of twenty, by some years, before he can be

* The full pay of a Surgeon in the *foot* is only 73*l.* and I am now supposing, as should be the case, that he enjoys no separate commission.

duly

duly qualified for his Office; he must also have received an expensive education, and afterwards resided some years at an university, or some reputable Medical School, and this too at a considerable expence. This the Surgeon ought to do, before he can enter on the world as qualified; or should be in a situation to recover an equivalent for his time, money, and trouble.

Thus one third of life is spent, ere he can or *ought* to act for himself!—and surely this consideration should have no small weight, since the period of our existence is so limited. But this is not the case with the Officer, he may be admitted to rank as Ensign at the age of Sixteen, or even much earlier, and as learning does not appear to be deemed a *requisite* in the military profession, he *may*, or may *not* have received a classical education; nor can it be supposed at this age he has received

ceived a perfect one ; and I am inclined to believe he will more frequently be found to have received no education whatever above the bare *reading* of his mother tongue, and perhaps some feeble efforts, towards writing and arithmetic ; and thus equipped, if fortunate may at the age of twenty-five or thirty, rank as Major, or perhaps as Colonel, for as the Dramatist observes “ Colonels are all *young men now.*”

Thus he hath two striking advantages above the Surgeon. In the first place he receives pay from the age of Sixteen, or earlier, without being at much previous expence for education ; and secondly, at an age when the Surgeon can only be qualified for *admittance*, the Officer has an equivalent in rank, pay, and other advantages, far superior to what the Surgeon can *ever* expect. “ Tis true, the Officer may often purchase
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both his rank and emoluments ; but is he not allowed to *sell* them when he may wish to retire from service ?--But I believe of late the Surgeon is forbid to sell, even although he may have purchased, and what is still more hard, there is no provision for him, when he may become superannuated and so infirm as to be no longer capable of performing the duties of his Office. He *may* retire, but should he have no private fortune, which is more frequently the case, he must retire to *starve* ; while the Officer, whose *individual* utility or importance can never be so great, is permitted to subsist the winter of his life, on the *sale* of his commission, or a *comfortable half pay*.

We have already proposed that every allowance granted to the Surgeon except his pay, should be withheld, among which may be included the allowance for inoculation*,
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* This allowance is certainly very inconsistent, as
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and the *extra medicines* sent to each Regiment when it camp, which together must amount to at least £10. per annum. Thus by adding the Surgenn's and Mates full pay to these allowances we shall have about £297. out of which to supply the Regiment with medicines, &c. and to augment the Surgeon's pay. It was the opinion of Dr. Broklesby†, who wrote on this subject, *thirty years* ago, that "Gentlemen filling the medical character, should be sought out more respectable, better qualified, and every way more truly honourable; and then they should also be better rewarded than the generality of the present deserve to be"—And he further adds, that a Regimental practitioner properly qualified by a liberal education should not have less than £250. per annum, and no one surely would suppose that the necessaries of life are the Surgeon ought to perform every medical duty without a bribe.

† Broklesby on CEconomy and Mil. Dis. &c.

cheaper

cheaper than they were thirty years ago.[†] We would therefore suggest, that the pay of a mate* be added to that of the Surgeon, and to make up the rest if qualified, he should have the office and emolument of Paymaster, the duties of which could infringe but little on his time, and could not interfere with his duty as a Surgeon. Thus would there be a saving to Government of at least *one hundred pounds* per annum, since we have shown in a former page, that out of £160. granted to the Surgeon yearly for the purchase of Medicine, &c. not more than £60. could justly be expended for that purpose. We shall not find that with such an allowance the Surgeon would enjoy any thing more than a moderate competency. And indeed “if he wishes to marry, which it is hoped is a state that will rather gain than loose credit in the Army, he must, even on this sum, exercise all possible œconomy to educate his family decently,

* I am supposing that no Mate is borne on the Establishment.

and loads them reproachably, nor would any one I think venture to assert, that there is any thing superfluous in a salary of £250 per annum, as times go, allowing for the necessary expences of an Officer, and as the value of money now stands.

"In almost any other way of life a man may obtain this, and that without either the toil or anxiety of study, or the expences at which medical honours must be obtained. In most of the gentler mechanical branches, as large, and frequently a larger sum, is yearly cleared. If this be true, as I am well convinced it is, who would enter the Army as a Surgeon, when he must starve on much less than the least? A Soldier (we comprehend the Surgeon in this title) must purchase every article of life at a far greater price than others. He *must* dine, if he can afford to dine at all, at a common tavern expence; in every town he finds himself a stranger, and every one he deals with eager in taking every

every possible advantage of his situation. The Surgeons should also be allowed half pay in time of peace, or otherwise at the commencement of every war, raw and inexperienced practitioners must be admitted, in lieu of those, whose knowledge and experience in Regimental practice must in a great measure secure them success; but who could not be expected to quit their private connection for a toilsome life so ill requited.

I cannot close this inquiry without a common place remark, that the wisest regulations can avail but little in the Army, unless enforced with the most uniform and determinate regard to discipline. I have heard of the most perfect regulations and most liberal grants for the clothing of an Army being set at naught by the pecuniative disposition of a Commanding Officer, and that the interested, the indolent, and inexperienced in preference to the zealous, the active, and discerning are suffered to impune in insolent distinc-

distinction. Thus would "War become a trade, by which *tyranny* might prey upon subjection, and *villainy* distract society from *mercenary* motives." Thus would "private accommodation hourly delapidate public property, while the drones of patronage would fatten upon the fruits of industry."

There are no doubt in every age and nation, men, who are only solicitous to aggrandize themselves at the expence of public justice, nay, even at the expence of humanity: but who that believes himself a man, that would be deemed as worthy of the name of *human*, could possibly espouse that wretch, whose very hands are stained with every *dirty trick of speculative villany*.

FINIS.

